

# What profit to poor?

By JOHN KIELY

**With only 40 nights and 40 days to the state poll, readers are joining the battle for hearts and minds. Under the Electoral Act, comment has to carry the full postal address of the letter writer.**

*Briefly*

**W**HILE THE FUTURE ownership of Victoria's public authorities is an election issue, "unfortunately, the debate is focused on public or private ownership," says David Griffiths of 71 Franciscan Avenue, Frankston. "There is a third option — making the authorities into cooperatives.

"Cooperatives are democratic because there is one vote per member. It is direct democracy. Cooperatives are owned by consumers, whereas private utilities are owned by investors.

"In the US are about 1000 rural electric cooperatives servicing local areas. In 1988 a typical cooperative served 7900 consumers, whereas the Central Alabama Electrical Cooperative served 22,000 and another served 45,000. The electric cooperatives have an ongoing commitment to economic development of local areas."